

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) An image processing method for performing image processing on image data comprising:
 - transferring said image data to a face identifying section of a device performing said image processing for generating face region information by identifying to identify the face region from said image data;
 - determining an operating mode of said a device performing said image processing; ~~and~~
 - transferring said face region information to a noise reduction section of said device for performing noise reduction on the face region of said image data based on said face region information; and
 - controlling said face identifying section and said noise reduction section to be off when the determined operating mode comprises other than a high-speed operating mode and a portrait operating mode.
2. (Currently amended) A digital camera comprising:
 - an image processing unit that performs image processing including contour correction on a shot image;
 - a face region identification unit that analyzes an image after the contour correction to generate face region information to identify the face region;
 - a noise reduction unit that performs noise reduction on the face region of the image after the contour correction based on said face region information;
 - a photography mode determination unit that determines a photography mode of said shot image; and
 - a control unit that controls ~~operates~~ said face region identification unit and said noise reduction unit to be off when said determined photography mode comprises other than a high-speed photography mode and a portrait photography mode.

3. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 2, further comprising:
a photography mode switch on a main body of said camera,
wherein said photography mode determination unit determines said photography mode based on a mode selection signal from the photography mode switch on the camera main body.
- 4-5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently amended) A programmable storage medium tangibly embodying an ~~An~~ image processing program executable by a computer to perform an image processing method for performing image processing on image data, said method comprising:
transferring said image data to a face identifying section of a device performing said image processing for generating face region information by identifying to identify ~~to identify~~ the face region from said image data;
determining an operating mode of said a device performing said image processing; and
transferring said face region information to a noise reduction section of said device for performing noise reduction on the face region of said image data based on said face region information; and
controlling said face identifying section and said noise reduction section to be off when the determined operating mode comprises other than a high-speed operating mode and a portrait operating mode.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 2, wherein said noise reduction unit performs noise reduction exclusively on said face region using a low-pass filter.
9. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 2, wherein said face region comprises a plurality of face regions, said face region identification unit identifying said plurality

of face regions and said noise reduction unit performing noise reduction on said plurality of face regions.

10. (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 2, wherein said control unit controls said face region identification unit and said noise reduction unit such that said ~~analyzing said information to identify~~ identifying said face region and said performing said noise reduction are not performed when a mode other than a high-speed photography mode is determined by said photography mode determination unit.
11. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 2, further comprising:
a shutter button and an operation switch which are connected to said control unit,
wherein said control unit performs control including at least one of automatic focus, automatic exposure, and automatic white balance based on an input from one of said shutter button and said operation switch.
12. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 2, further comprising:
a lens comprising an automatic focus mechanism.
13. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 12, further comprising:
a charge-coupled device (CCD) in a position corresponding to a focal point of said lens.
14. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 13, further comprising:
an analog signal processor for performing analog processing on a picture signal which is output from said CCD, and outputting RGB signals corresponding to said picture signal.
15. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 14, wherein said analog signal processor comprises a Correlated Double Sampling (CDS) circuit for performing noise reduction on said picture signal, and an Automatic Gain Control (AGC) circuit for performing

level adjustment on said picture signal by way of gain adjustment.

16. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 14, further comprising:
an analog-to-digital (A/D) converter which converts said RGB signals sequentially
applied by the analog signal processor to digital RGB signals.

17. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 16, further comprising:
a digital signal processor for converting said digital RGB signals to image data
comprising luminance data and color-difference data.

18. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 17, further comprising:
a memory for temporarily storing said image data.

19. (Previously presented) The digital camera according to claim 18, wherein said face region
identification unit receives said image data from said memory and generates said face region
information by using said image data.

20. (New) The image processing method according to claim 1, further comprising:
performing contour correction on said image data and storing said contour-corrected
image data in a memory of said device performing said image processing,
wherein said identifying said face region comprises identifying said face region from said
contour-corrected image data.

21. (New) The image processing method according to claim 20, wherein said transferring
said image data to a face identifying section comprises transferring said contour-corrected image
data from said memory to another memory in said face identifying section.